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A Child's Dream of a Star.

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CHARLES DICKENS

A Child's Dream of a Star

With numerous original illustrations by

ELIZABETH S. TUCKER

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A Child's Dream of a Star.

THERE was once a child, and he strolled about a good deal, and thought of a number of things. He had a sister, who was a child too, and his constant companion. These two used to wonder all day long. They wondered at the beauty of the flowers; they wondered at the height and blueness of the

They wondered at
the Beauty of the Flowers.

sky; they wondered at the depth of the bright water; they wondered at the goodness and the power of God who made the lovely world

THE BUDS ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE FLOWERS.

They used to say to one another sometimes, "Supposing all the children upon earth were to

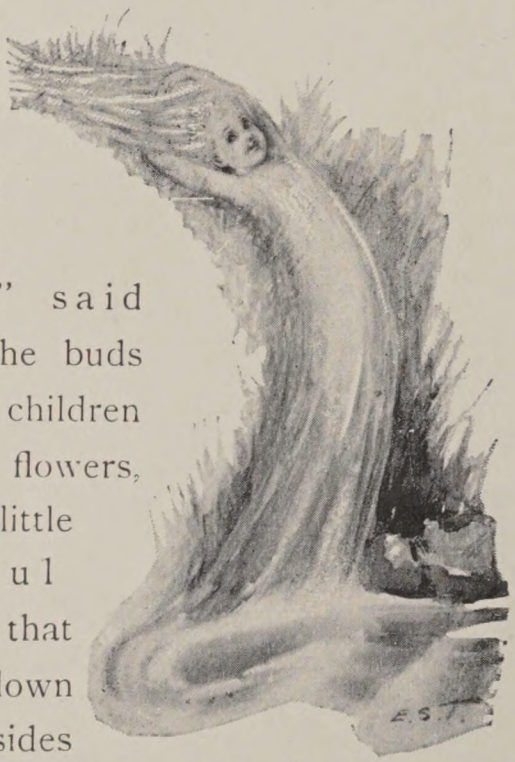
They wondered at the Depth
of the Bright Water.

E.S.

die, would the flowers, and the water and the sky be sorry?"

They believed they would be sorry.

"For," said they, "the buds are the children of the flowers, and the little playful streams that gambol down the hill-sides are the children of the water; and the smallest bright



THE LITTLE PLAYFUL STREAMS THAT GAMBOL DOWN THE HILLSIDES.

specks playing at hide-and-seek in the sky all night, must surely be the children of the stars ; and they would all be grieved to see their playmates, the children of men, no more."

There was one clear, shining star that used to come out in the sky before the rest, near the church spire, above the graves.

Every Night they Watched
for it, Standing Hand
in Hand.

E.S.T.

It was larger and more beautiful, they thought, than all the others, and every night they watched for it, standing hand in hand at a window. Whoever saw it first cried out, "I see the star!" And often they cried out both together, knowing so well when it would rise, and where. So they grew to be such friends with it, that, before lying down in their beds, they always looked out once again to bid it good-night; and when they were turning round to sleep, they used to say, "God bless the star!"

But while she was still very young, oh very, very young, the

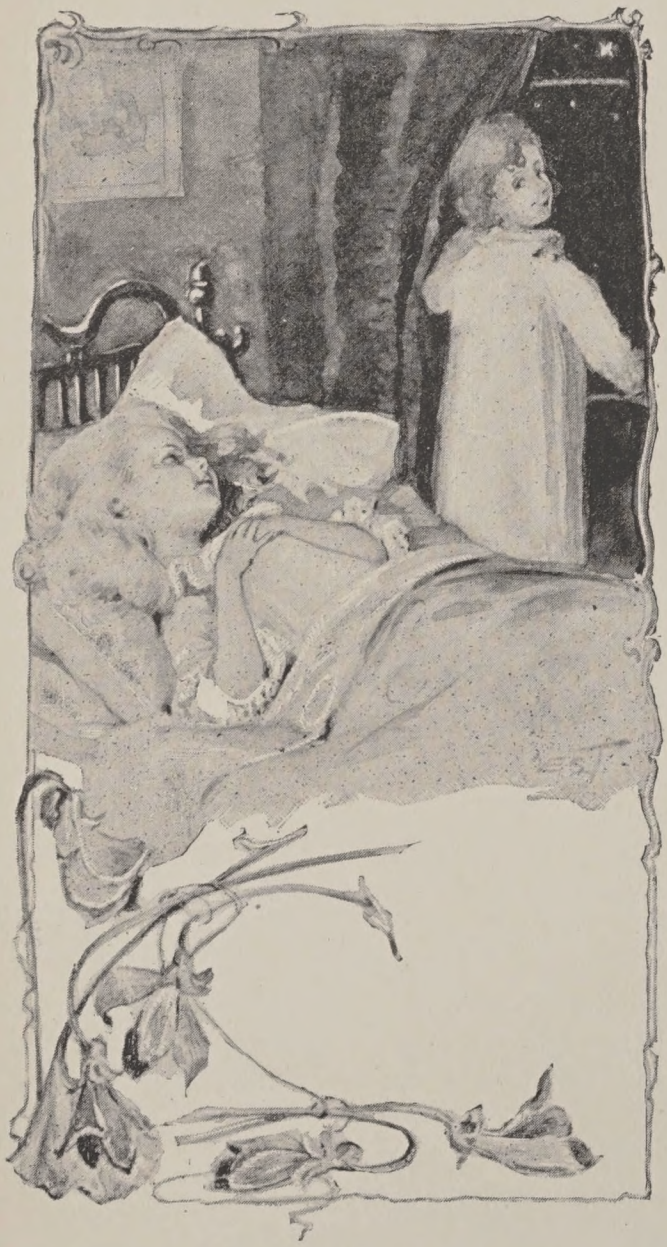
When They were turning
round to Sleep, They
used to say,
"God Bless the Star!"

E. S.

sister drooped, and came to be so very weak that she could no longer stand in the window at night; and then the child looked sadly out by himself and when he saw the star, turned round and said to the patient pale face on the bed, "I see the star!" and then a smile would come upon the face, and a little weak voice used to say, "God bless my brother and the star!"

THE CHILD LOOKED SADLY OUT BY HIMSELF.

And then a Smile would come
upon the Face.



And so the time came, all too soon! when the child looked out alone, and when there was no face on the bed; and when there was a little grave among the graves, not there before; and when the star made long rays down toward him, as he saw it through his tears.

Now, these rays were so bright, and they seemed to make such a shining way from earth to Heaven, that when the child went to his solitary bed, he dreamed about the star; and dreamed that, lying where he was, he saw a train of people taken up that sparkling road by angels. And the star,

opening, showed him a great world of light, where many more such angels waited to receive them.

All these angels who were waiting turned their beaming eyes upon the people who were carried up into the star; and some came out from the long rows in which they stood, and fell upon the people's necks and kissed them tenderly, and went away with them down avenues of light, and were so happy in their company that, lying in his bed, he wept for joy.

But there were many angels who did not go with them, and

"Is my Brother come?"

among them one he knew. The patient face that once had lain upon the bed was glorified and radiant, but his heart found out his sister among all the host.

His sister's angel lingered near the entrance of the star, and said to the leader among those who had brought the people thither :

" Is my brother come ? "

And he said, " No."

She was turning hopefully away, when the child stretched out his arms and cried, " O, sister, I am here ! Take me ! " And then she turned her beaming eyes upon him, and it was night ; and the star was shining

in the room, making long rays down toward him as he saw it through his tears.

THERE WAS A BABY BORN TO BE A BROTHER TO THE CHILD.

From that hour forth, the child looked out upon the star as on the home he was to go to when

his time should come; and he thought that he did not belong to the earth alone, but to the star too, because of his sister's angel gone before.

There was a baby born to be a brother to the child, and while he was so little that he never had spoken a word, he stretched his tiny form out on his bed, and died.

Again the child dreamed of the open star, and of the company of angels, and the train of people, and the rows of angels with their beaming eyes all turned upon those people's faces.

Said his sister's angel to the leader:

The Child beheld his
Brother's Angel in her Arms.

"Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Not that one, but another."

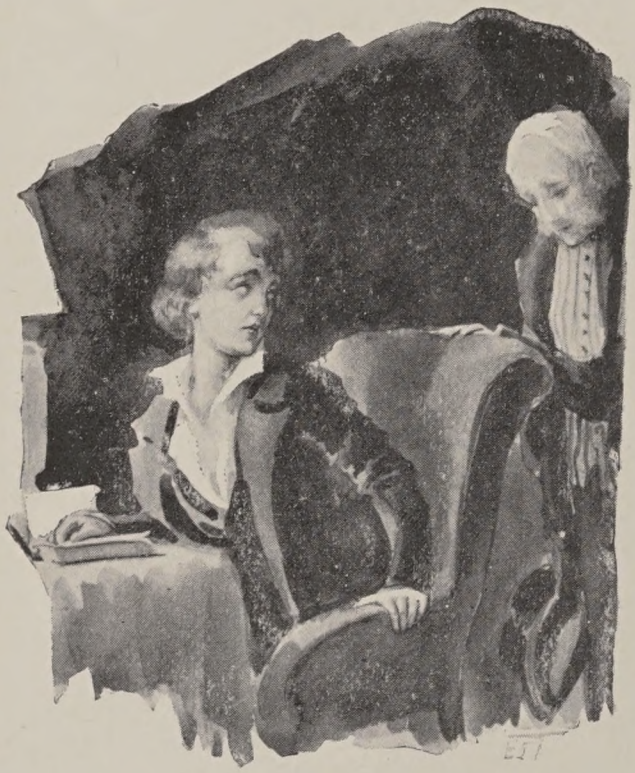
As the child beheld his brother's angel in her arms, he cried, "O, sister, I am here! Take me!" And she turned and smiled upon him, and the star was shining.

He grew to be a young man, and was busy at his books, when an old servant came to him and said:

"Thy mother is no more. I bring her blessing on her darling son!"

Again at night he saw the star and all that former company.

"Thy Mother is no more. I
bring her Blessing on her
darling Son!"



Said his sister's angel to the leader :

"Is my brother come ? "

And he said, "Thy mother ! "

A mighty cry of joy went forth through all the star, because the mother was reunited to her two children. And he stretched out his arms and cried, "O, mother, sister, and brother, I am here ! Take me ! " And they answered him, "Not yet," and the star was shining.

He grew to be a man, whose hair was turning gray, and he was sitting in his chair by his fire-side, heavy with grief, and with his face bedewed with tears,

The Mother was reunited to her two Children.

when the star opened once again.

HE WAS SITTING IN HIS CHAIR BY HIS FIRE-SIDE, HEAVY WITH GRIEF.

Said his sister's angel to the leader: "Is my brother come?"

And he said, "Nay, but his maiden daughter."

HIS MAIDEN DAUGHTER.

And the man who had been the child saw his daughter, newly lost to him, a celestial creature among those three, and he said, "My daughter's head is on my sister's bosom, and her arm is round my mother's neck,

"My Daughter's Head is on
my Sister's Bosom, and
her Arm is round my
Mother's Neck,
and at her Feet there is the
Baby of old Time.

E.S.T.

and at her feet there is the baby of old time, and I can bear the parting from her, God be praised!"

And the star was shining.

Thus the child came to be an old man, and his once smooth face was wrinkled, and his steps were slow and feeble, and his back was bent. And one night, as he lay upon his bed, his children standing round, he cried, as he had cried so long ago:

"I see the star!"

They whispered one another, "He is dying."

And he said, "I am. My age is falling from me like a garment,

"I See the Star!"

and I move toward the star as a child. And O, my Father, now I thank Thee that it has so often opened to receive those dear ones who await me !"

And the star was shining, and it shines upon his grave.

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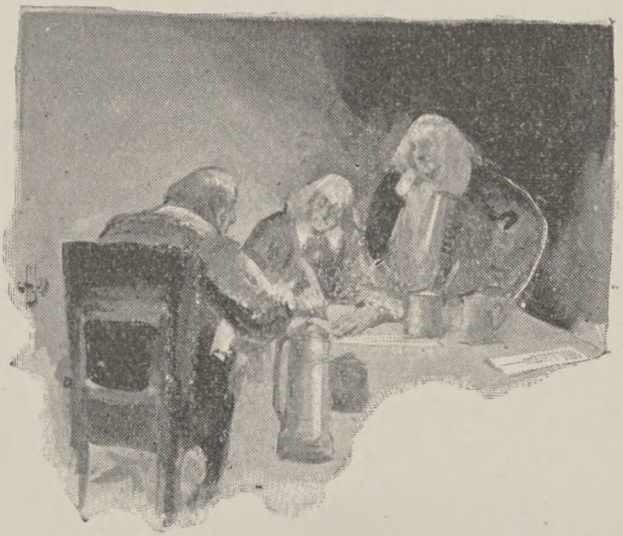
"This is the forest primeval"

"'PATIENCE!' THE PRIEST WOULD SAY."

"HUNTING FOR FURS IN THE FORESTS."

Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no language;
And all his thoughts congealed into lines on his face, as the vapors
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table,



"WROTE WITH A STEADY HAND."

"HOLDING ALOFT IN HIS HANDS, WITH ITS SEALS, THE ROYAL COMMISSION."

Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches;
But not a voice replied; no answer came from the darkness;
And, when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the silence.
Then Evangeline slept; but the boatmen rowed through the midnight,
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-songs,

"WATER-LILIES IN MYRIADS."

Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers,
And through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of the desert,
Far off, indistinct, as of wave or wind in the forest,

Specimen Pages,

"The Day Dream."
Tennyson.

Collection of "Masterpieces."

Harper
'94

III.

'O eyes long laid in happy sleep!'

'O happy sleep, that lightly fled!'

"AND O'ER THEM MANY A FLOWING RANGE OF VAPOR BUOY'D THE CRESCENT-BARK."

'O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!'

'O love, thy kiss would wake the dead!'

Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
Grave faces gather'd in a ring.

"AND BEAKER BRIMM'D
WITH NOBLE WINE.

Specimen Pages,

"Songs of Seven." Ingelow.

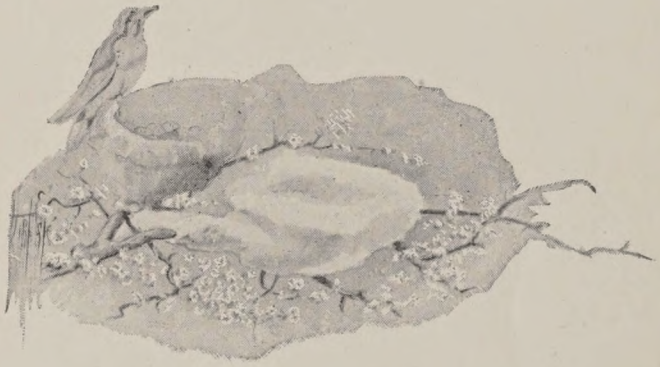
Collection of "Masterpieces."

"BUT I'LL LOVE HIM MORE, MORE THAN E'ER WIFE LOVED BEFORE, BE THE DAYS DARK OR BRIGHT."

BY THE SYCAMORE
PASSED HE, AND THROUGH
THE WHITE CLOVER.

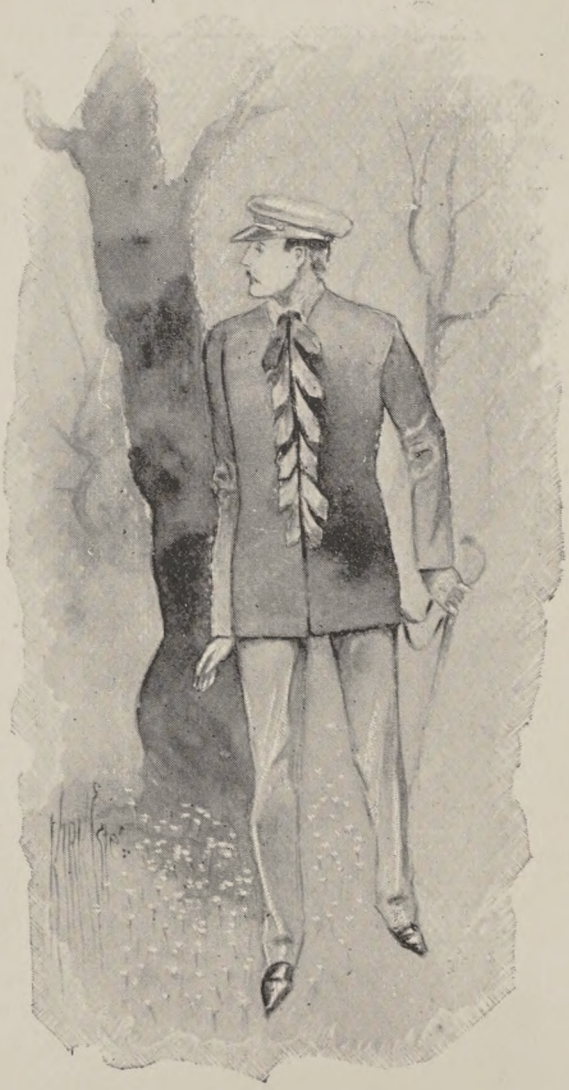
IV.

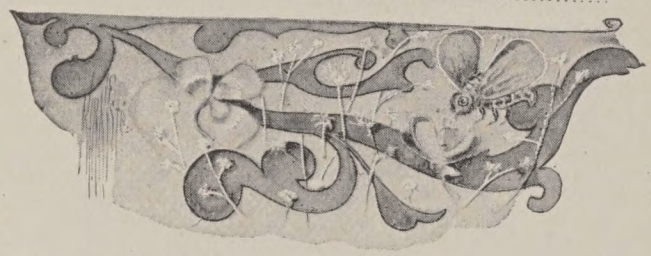
A song of a nest :—
There was once a nest in a hollow :



"I PRAY YOU HEAR MY SONG OF A NEST, FOR IT IS NOT LONG."

Down in the mosses and knot-grass pressed,
Soft and warm, and full to the brim—





"O VELVET BEE, YOU'RE A DUSTY FELLOW."

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,
You've powdered your legs with gold!
O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,
Give me your money to hold!

O columbine, open your folded wrapper,
Where two twin turtle-doves dwell!

Specimen Pages,

"Selections from Point Lace and Diamonds." Baker.

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"WE TWO TOOK POSSESSION OF THE STAIRS."

—*Page* 8.

"HER FACE IS SAINT-LIKE"

That bright young creature kneeling there
With every feeling, every thought

Absorbed in high and holy dreams
Of—new Spring dresses, truth to say
To them the time is sanctified
From Shrove-tide until Easter day.

"'I, HELENA, TAKE THEE—LOVE—CHERISH—AND'—WELL, I CAN'T HELP IT,—'OBEY.'"

"HER FATHER'S VOICE CAME THROUGH THE WOOD, HE'D MADE A FORTUNE TANNING LEATHER."

Above, the heavens aglow with light,
Beneath our feet the sleeping ocean,
E'en as the sky my hope was bright,
Deep as the sea was my devotion.

Her father's voice came through the wood,
He'd made a fortune tanning leather;
I was his clerk; I thought it good
To keep on talking about the weather.

Quite a heavy piece of work.
So when I had got them done—
Why I thought them much too good
Just to waste that way on one.
Jack, I told you, didn't I,
All about that black-eyed girl
Up in Stratford—last July—
Oh! you know; you saw her curl?
Well, old fellow, she's the one
That this row is all about,
For I sent her—who'd have thought
Maud would ever find it out—
Those same verses, word for word—
Hang it, man! you needn't roar—
'Splendid joke!" well, so I thought—
No, don't think so any more.
Yesterday, you know it rained,
I'd been up late—at a ball—
Didn't know what else to do—
Went up and made Maud a call.
Found some other girl there, too,
They were playing a duet.
"Fred, my cousin, Nelly Deane,"—

"'SPLENDID JOKE!' WELL, SO I THOUGHT—
NO, DON'T THINK SO ANY MORE."

Specimen Pages,

"Thanatopsis." Bryant.

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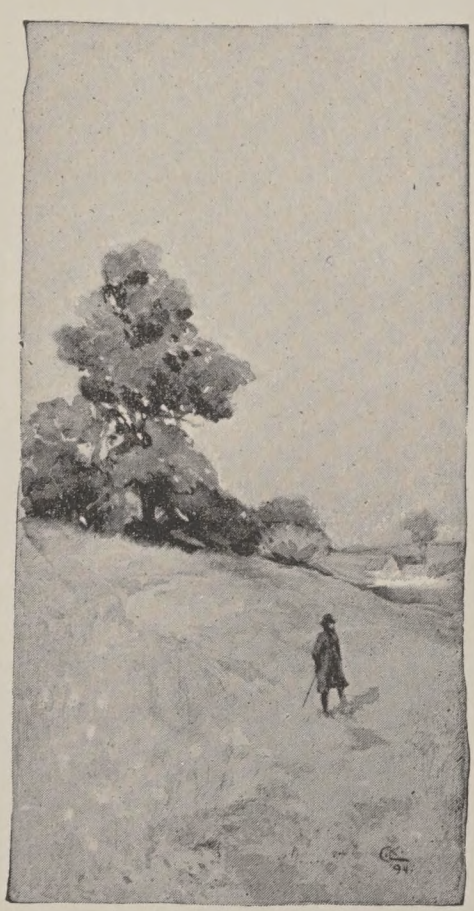

Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,

"THE SLUGGISH CLOD, WHICH THE RUDE SWAIN TURNS WITH HIS SHARE, AND TREADS UPON."

Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,

"WHEN THY SUMMONS COMES."

Like one who wraps the drapery
of his couch

"SUSTAINED AND SOOTHED BY AN UNFALTERING TRUST."

About him, and lies down to
pleasant dreams.

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